

Message Text

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S E C R E T MOSCOW 1436

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3,4

TAGS: ASEC, US,UR

SUBJ: MOSCOW SIGNAL: APPROACH TO GROMYKO

REF: STATE 24166

1. GROMYKO RESPONDED WITHIN A FEW MINUTES TO MY URGENT REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH HIM ON SATURDAY AND RECEIVED ME AT 12:45 TODAY, JAN. 31. I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DCM. KOMPLEKTOV, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, USA DIVISION IN MFA, AND SOVIET NOTE TAKER WERE ALSO PRESENT. AFTER REFERRING TO PREVIOUS COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT, I COVERED TALKING POINTS PROVIDED IN PARA 2 REFTEL, AND LEFT INFORMAL PAPER WITH GROMYKO WHICH CONTAINED FIRST EIGHT OF THESE POINTS (I.E., FROM "THE PRESIDENT ACCEPTED... TO "WILL BE HIGHLY VISIBLE"). FOLLOWING THREE POINTS DELIVERED ORALLY, BUT NOT IN WRITING. IN ADDITION, I LEFT WITH GROMYKO A SUMMARY STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE U.S. EXPERTS, TEXT OF WHICH IS BEING SENT IN SEPARATE MESSAGE, AND OFFERED TO SEND COMPLETE REPORT OF OUR SPECIALISTS MONDAY MORNING.

2. GROMYKO REPLIED AS FOLLOWS:

-- HE DID NOT WISH TO GET INTO TECHNICAL QUESTIONS, BUT WOULD SAY THAT IT SEEMED TO HIM THAT THIS QUESTION IS AN IMAGINARY ONE. IT IS DIFFICULT TO FERRET OUT THE REASONS IT IS RAISED. HE WOULD LIMIT SELF TO THREE OBSERVATIONS.

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-- FIRST, HE WOULD CONFIRM THE MESSAGE OF BREZHNEV TO PRESIDENT FORD, I.E., ANY RADIATIONS REACHING EMBASSY FROM OUTSIDE IS OF INDUSTRIAL ORIGIN. THERE IS NO NEW RADIATION. CONJECTURES OF U.S. SPECIALISTS CANNOT CHANGE THIS FACT.

-- SECOND ALLEGED HEALTH DANGER IS FABRICATION (IZOBRETENIE). SOVIET SPECIALISTS HAVE EXAMINED EVIDENCE AND SAY THAT DANGER IS IMAGINED (VYDUMKA). US SPECIALISTS REFUSED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT SOVIET STANDARDS FOR SAFE LEVEL OF RADIATION EXPOSURE.

-- THIRD, AS FOR THE ALLUSION TO THE POSSIBILITY U.S. AND SOV EMBASSIES, OF STAFF REDUCTION AT OUR EMBASSY, THIS IS FOR U.S. TO DECIDE. BUT IF U.S. PROCEEDS IN THIS MANNER, SOVIETS WILL DRAW THE NECESSARY CONCLUSIONS. FURTHERMORE, IF US PUBLICIZES ALL OF THIS, THE SOVIETS WILL ALSO BRING THIS MATTER TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PUBLIC AND WILL PRESENT THE "TRUE FACTS."

-- GROMYKO THEN EXPRESSED HIS SURPRISE THAT WE CONTINUE TO RAISE MATTER AND PROFESSED NOT TO UNDERSTAND WHY WE ARE DOING SO, AND CONCLUDED THAT HE COULD SAY NO MORE. OUR SCIENTISTS HAVE CONFIRMED JOINT READINGS IN U.S. EMBASSY AND AS FOR DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS, THERE ARE NOT TWO "SCIENCES, BUT ONLY ONE.

3. I POINTED OUT TO GROMYKO THAT THIS IS A SERIOUS MATTER WHICH HAS IN NO WAY BEEN CREATED ARTIFICALLY. WE TOO WISH THAT IT HAD NOT COME UP, BUT OUR SPECIALISTS ARE OF FIRM OPINION THAT THERE ARE INDEED DIRECTIONAL SIGNALS AND THAT MEDICAL RECORDS OF OUR PERSONNEL DISPLAY SUSPECT SYMPTOMS. I THEREFORE REITERATED OUR REQUEST THAT THE SOVIET HYGIENE SERVICE LOCATE THE SOURCES AND HAVE THEM TURNED OFF.

4. GROMYKO OBSERVED THAT SOVIETS CANNOT ADOPT ATTITUDE OTHER THAN ONE BASED ON THE REAL SITUATION. KOMPLEKTOV MENTIONED INTERNAL RADIATION IN EMBASSY, AND GROMYKO REMARKED THAT THEIR EXPERTS FOUND EVIDENCE THAT THERE ARE SOURCES OF RADIATION FROM INSIDE THE EMBASSY. I REPLIED THAT THESE LEVELS WERE MINIMAL, IF EXISTENT AT ALL, WHEREUPON GROMYKO OBSERVED THAT U.S. SPECIALISTS WISH TO SHIFT BLAME ENTIRELY TO SOVIET SIDE.

5. I CONCLUDED BY REMINDING HIM THAT, IN ANY EVENT, IF SIGNALS DO
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NOT GO OFF, WE MUST BRIEF OUR PERSONNEL ON FEBRUARY 4.

6. COMMENT: THROUGHOUT OUR DISCUSSION, GROMYKO WAS CALM AND MODERATE IN TONE, BUT COMPLETELY UNYIELDING. I DO NOT FIND HIS REACTION SURPRISING, SINCE--HAVING SENT MESSAGE FROM BREZHNEV DENYING EXISTENCE OF ANY BEAMED RADIATION--SOVIETS OBVIOUSLY CANNOT ADMIT THAT SUCH EXISTS. IF THEY DECIDE TO TURN OFF SIGNALS, I ASSUME THAT THEY WILL SIMPLY BE TURNED OFF WITH NO EXPLANATION GIVEN, EITHER PRIVATELY OR OFFICIALLY. IT WOULD PROBABLY BE MOST HELPFUL IF APPROACH IS ALSO MADE TO DOBRYNIN AT THIS JUNCTURE, SINCE HE IS PROBABLY IN BETTER POSITION THAN MOST SOVIET OFFICIALS TO REALIZE DANGER TO OUR RELATIONSHIP--AND TO THE OPERATIONS OF HIS OWN MISSION--WHICH PUBLIC AIRING OF THIS MATTER WOULD INEVITABLY ENTAIL. FULL REPORT OF EXPERTS WILL BE

FORWARDED THIS WEEKEND IN CASE YOU WISH TO PASS IT TO DOBRYNIN.

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